

Easement

P. G. #68-5a

Riversdale Slave Quarters

ca. 1801

4811 Riverdale Road, Riverdale, Md.

Pub/Occ/Office/Good

The Riversdale slave quarters is a two-story brick gable-roofed building covered with yellow stucco. The east and west facades are three bays in length, with entrance through the north bay on both facades. There is a second story window in both north and south gable ends; an original entrance in the south gable end, once sheltered by a shed-roof porch, has been reduced to a small first-story window. There is a central chimney at the ridge of the roof. A one-story one-room addition has been attached to the west facade, and a brick breezeway now connects the outbuilding to the west wing of the Riversdale mansion.

This was perhaps the most substantial slaves quarters in Prince George's County. It is contemporary with the Riversdale mansion, constructed ca. 1801 by Baron H. J. Stier of Belgium, and was probably the original kitchen building. After the kitchen wing of the mansion was constructed in 1807, the subject building came to be used exclusively as a slaves quarters.

This building is significant, being the only known surviving substantial structure of its kind in Prince George's. For the last 30 years, it has been used as office space, perhaps a unique example of adoptive reuse for this type of structure.

Maryland Historical Trust
State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Magi No. 1700650307

DOE ___yes ___no

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Riversdale Slave Quarters

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 4811 Riverdale Road ___ not for publication

city, town Riverdale ___ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Prince George

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	___ agriculture ___ museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial ___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational ___ private residence
___ site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	___ entertainment ___ religious
___ object	___ in process	___ yes: restricted	___ government ___ scientific
	___ being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	___ industrial ___ transportation
	___ not applicable	___ no	___ military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Office

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name M-NCPPC

street & number 6600 Kenilworth Avenue telephone no.: 779-2011

city, town Riverdale state and zip code Maryland 20737

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. P. G. County Courthouse liber 1125

street & number Main Street folio 473

city, town Upper Marlboro state Maryland

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Historic American Building Survey

date ___ federal ☒ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington, D. C., state

7. Description

Survey No. P.G.#68-5a

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site

☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The slave quarters at Riversdale is a two-story brick gable-roofed building covered with yellow stucco. The east and west facades are three bays in length, with entrance through the north bay on both facades. There is a second story window in both north and south gable ends; there was an entrance centered in the south gable end, which has been reduced to a small window. A horizontal line across the south gable end at the second-story level (visible in old photographs) suggests that there was once a shed-roof porch. There is a central chimney at the ridge of the roof.

A modern brick one-room addition has been attached to the west facade, and a brick breezeway now connects the outbuilding with the east wing of the Riversdale mansion (about 20 yards to the west).

8. Significance

Survey No. P.G. #68-5a

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Black History

Specific dates ca. 1801-1803 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This is the most substantial slave quarters, certainly of those few which remain standing in Prince George's County, and possibly of all that were ever erected here. It is approximately contemporary with the Riversdale Mansion, constructed between 1801 and 1803 by Baron Henri Joseph Stier of Belgium. It was almost certainly constructed originally as a kitchen (cf. the large chimney and fire-places in the center of the building) with rooms for house slaves on the second level. Sometime after the completion of the kitchen and pantry in the east wing of the mansion (1807), the outbuilding came to be used exclusively as a slave quarters.¹ It is described as "servants house of brick" in a fire insurance policy of 1849, taken out by Charles Benedict Calvert, grandson of the Baron and third proprietor of Riversdale.² This building was apparently the quarters of the Calvert's house slaves from ca. 1807 until Emancipation in 1864.

At some time (probably after 1849) an unusual frame addition was built on to the north gable end of the quarters. This consisted of a four-story bell tower adjoining the brick quarters, and a one-story one-bay gable-roofed addition attached to the north of the tower. This frame addition was standing in the 1880's and 1890's but was demolished before 1910, leaving no trace.³

his building is significant because it is a very substantial structure, constructed very close to the plantation mansion, and has survived with the mansion for more than 180 years. For the last 30 years, it has been used as an office building, perhaps a unique example of adaptive reuse for this type of structure.

- 1.) Riversdale Historic Structures Report, M-NCPPC 1979
- 2.) Policy #121, Mutual Fire Insurance Co. of Montgomery County, 1849
- 3.) Washington Evening Star, 2 August 1890, p.8 ff.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. P.G. #68-5a

P.G. Co. Deeds #1125:473

Lockwood, M.S. Historic Homes in Washington, 1889

Mutual Fire Insurance Co. of Montgomery Co., Policy #121 on

Riversdale, 1849

Pearl, Susan G., History of Riversdale, Historic Structures Report,

M-NCPPC 1979

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name Washington East

Quadrangle scale _____

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
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1.. Form Prepared By

name/title Susan G. Pearlorganization History Divisiondate April 1, 1983street & number 4811 Riverdale Roadtelephone 779-2011city or town Riverdalestate Maryland

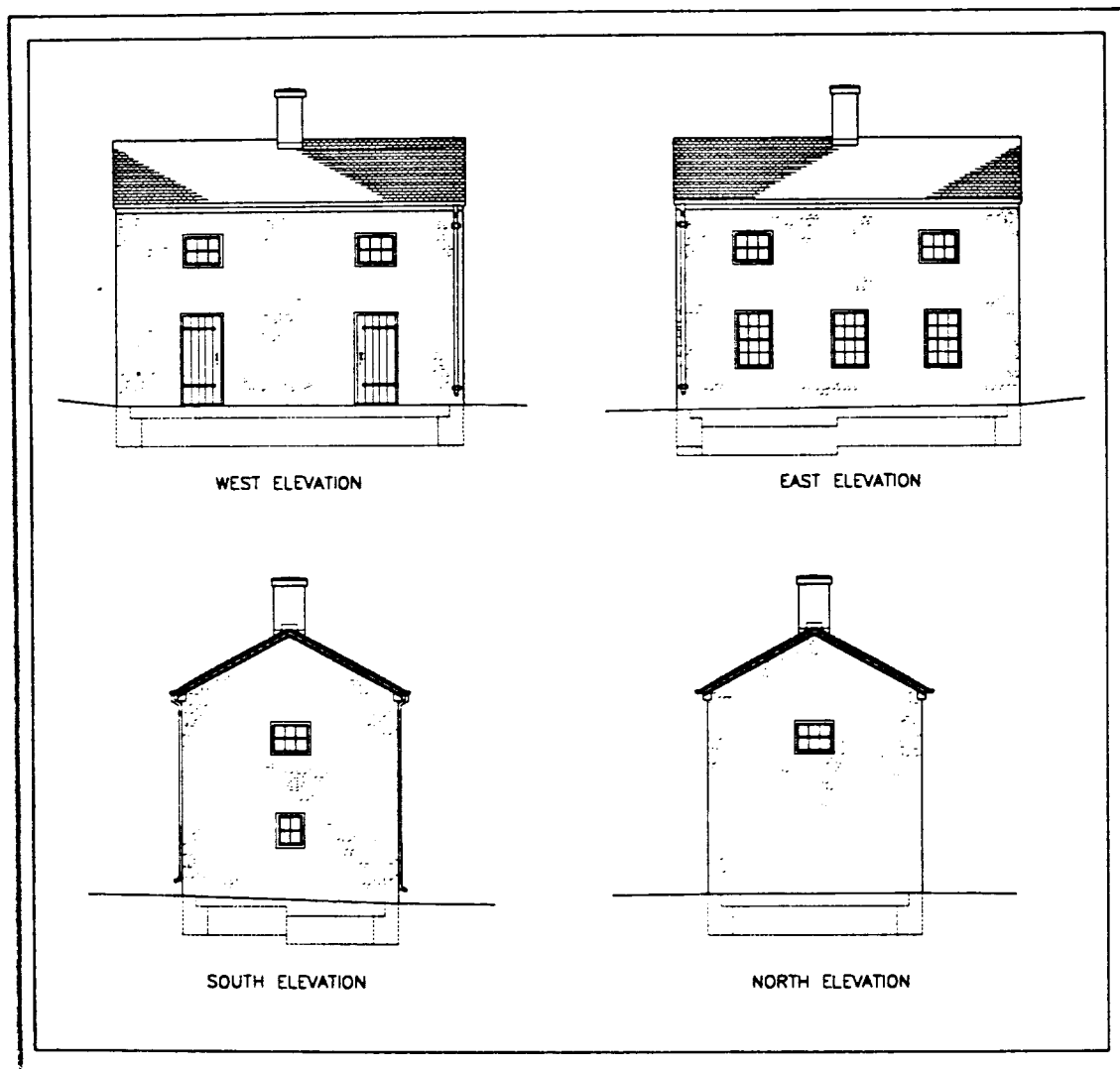
The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

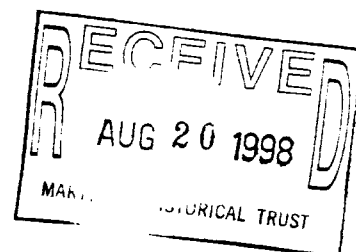
RIVERSDALE DEPENDENCY

RIVERDALE, MARYLAND



DESIGN DEVELOPMENT 35% SUBMISSION

17 AUGUST, 1998



for Governor Eden's lovely wife, Caroline Calvert Eden, George Calvert's paternal aunt, who had been a frequent visitor at Mount Airy during George's childhood.

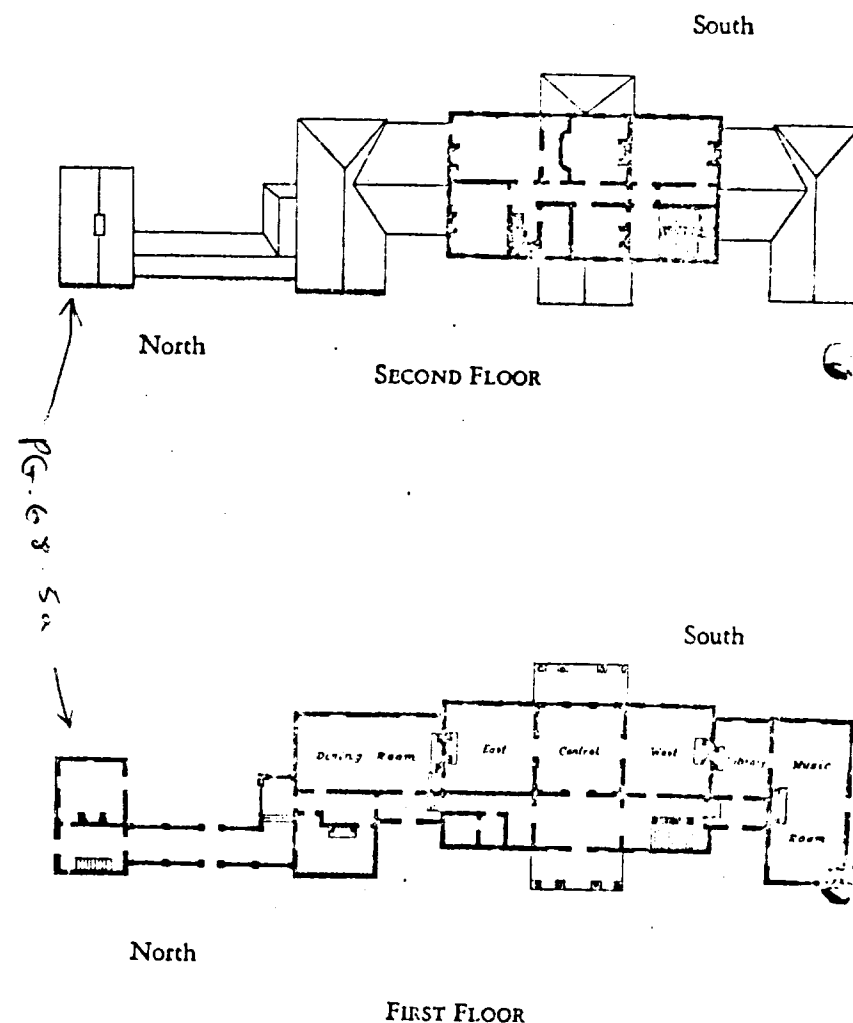
In the fall of this year, the public buildings in the District of Columbia being ready, Congress held its first session in the new Capital.

The following spring, Stier's son, Charles, "lent his name in the purchase" for his father of six lots in Bladensburg and five tracts of land adjoining in Prince George's County, conveyed by William and Helen Steuart to Charles Jean Stier. This low lying meadow land, something over 800 acres, in a rich agricultural section of Maryland, between the upper reaches of the Paint Branch and the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River, were the nucleus of the plantation of Riversdale.¹⁸

The topography of the land was similar to the Belgian holdings of Baron de Stier, just north of Antwerp. The family decided that the house to be erected here should follow the classic lines of the Chateau du Mick, built ca. 1775. Accordingly, Charles drew the plans for the house prior to his return to Belgium in November, 1801. That same year ground was broken for the mansion. Bricks, for the house, of a bright salmon color, were made from the local clay.

Rosalie Calvert wrote to her brother in December 1801: "... the labour of building seems to agree with him [Papa] ... the house is progressing well." Residing conveniently near, Henri Stier carefully watched the construction. The deep vaulted cellars were the first indication of the solid building technique so pronounced in the central structure. The massive brick arches were bridged by hand-hewn 12 x 12-inch oak beams, which still bear the adz marks. The central beams are supported by trunks of cedar.

While the house has been greatly enlarged and altered since its original owner's departure, the central part retains its essential features and style. As the plan shows, the entrance hall leads into a square drawing room overlooking the grounds to the south. On either side are rooms of almost identical size, with similar, if less elaborate, decoration. The central salon has three shallow arched panels on each side. The semi-circular arches are supported by paired, decorated Corinthian pilasters. On the outside or south



FLOOR PLAN OF RIVERSDALE, 1950
Showing the "Breezeway" which now connects the old kitchen with the east wing.

¹⁸ Prince George's County Deeds, Liber J. R. 14. # 8, f. 584-5.

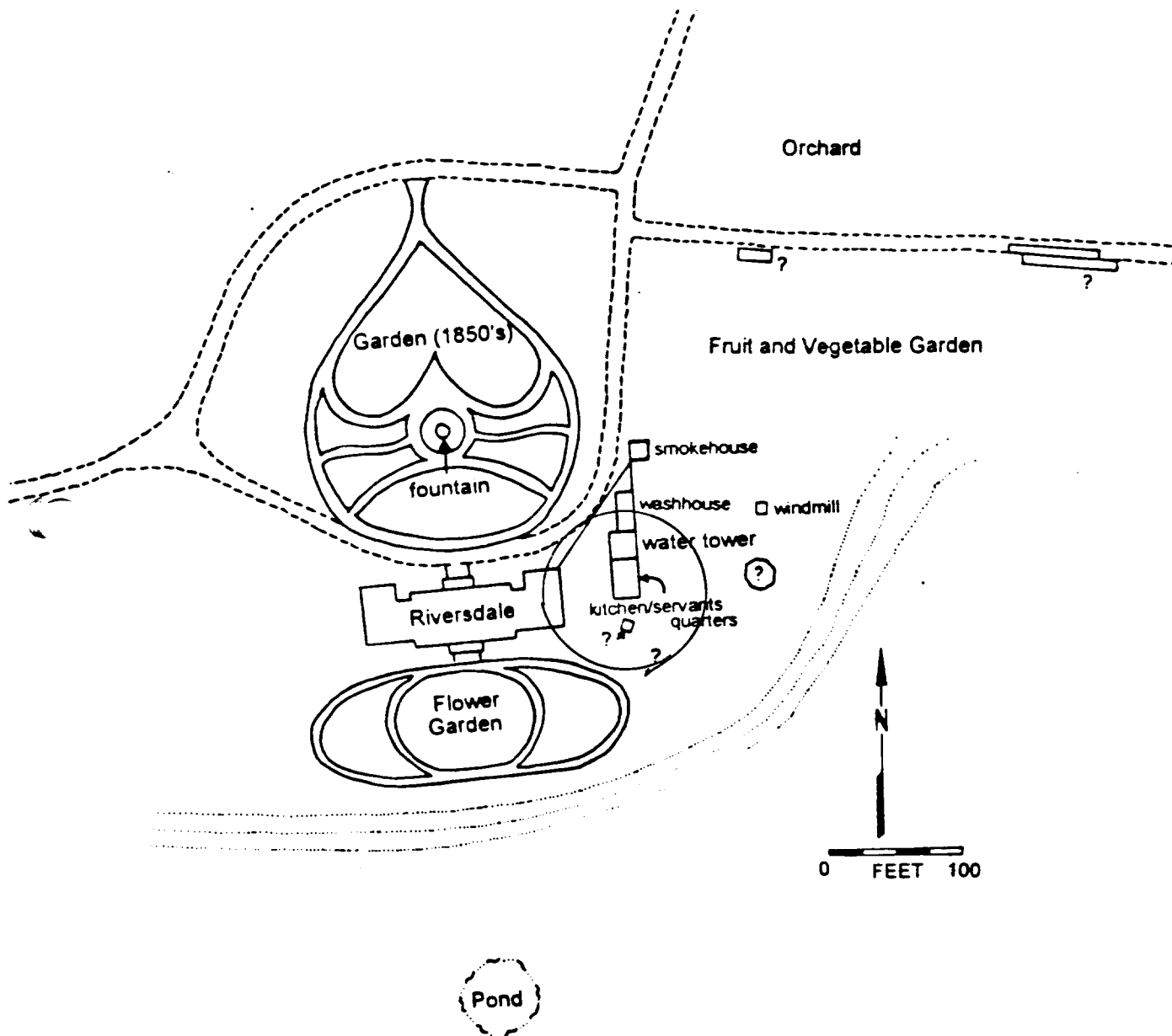


Figure 3.5. Detail of Figure 3.4 (1853).

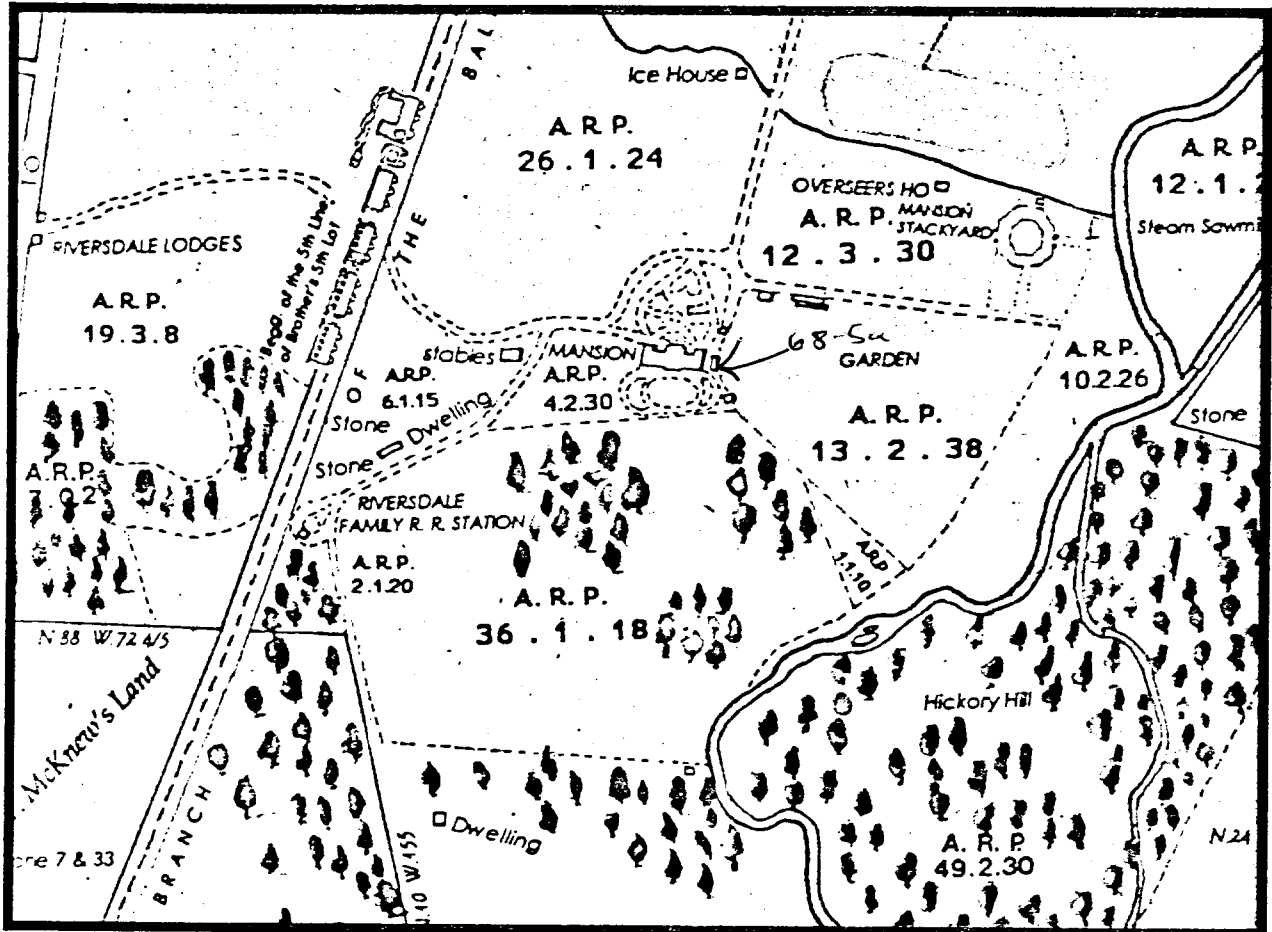


Figure 6.6 Detail of the Riversdale Mansion and Immediate Surroundings, 1853
(Source: Sides 1853).

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

PG-63-5a

STATE Maryland	
COUNTY Prince George's	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

1. NAME			
COMMON:		Riversdale	
AND/OR HISTORIC:		Calvert Mansion	
2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER:			
South side Riverdale Road between 18th and Taylor Streets			
CITY OR TOWN:			
Riverdale			
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Maryland	24	Prince George's	033
3. MAP REFERENCE			
SOURCE:			
U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute map Washington East Quadrangle			
SCALE: 1:24,000			
DATE: 1965			
4. REQUIREMENTS			
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS			
1. Property boundaries where required.			
2. North arrow.			
3. Latitude and longitude reference.			



PG:68-5 & PG:68-5a
 Riversdale (Calvert Mansion) & Riversdale Slave Quarters
 4811 Riversdale Road
 Washington East Quadrangle



1998 Aerial Photo

Tax Map 42, Block 55, Parcel A





P. G. #68-5

Riversdale Slaves Quarters
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1983
Southeast 3/4 Elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



P. G. #68-5

Riversdale Slaves Quarters
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
March 1983
East Elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.



P. G. #68-5

Riversdale Slaves Quarters
Prince George's County, Md.
Susan G. Pearl
May 1983
Northwest 3/4 Elevation
Neg: Md. Hist. Trust, Annapolis, Md.